League of Nations; clergymen made League activities the burden of their sermons and addresses, and sometimes prayers, and the League of Nations Union had on its governing body distinguished Conservative, Liberal and Labour politicians, as well as archbishops and bishops, professors, peers, and other eminent persons. A large amount of propaganda was carried on, most well-intentioned, whose effect was to persuade the public that by supporting the League they would prevent the necessity ever again arising of having to shed their blood in defence of what blood had been shed to gain. The League came to seem like one of those much advertised life insurance policies which the prudent take out to guard against finding themselves in old age forlorn and destitute. Improvident nations which neglected thus to insure against the contingency of war, might have to endure another armageddon; but the provident ones had their policy, stamped and witnessed and paid up to date, their Covenant, to procure them exemption. |

It was obvious that, if the League Covenant really was a safeguard against war, armed forces were scarcely necessary; a traveller who, having insured his baggage, still kept his eyes glued anxiously on it, was behaving unreasonably. Governments, it was felt, which had repeatedly pledged themselves to eschew war, and repeatedly stressed their allegiance to the League, ought to disarm; yet, though they often proclaimed their intention of doing so, when it came to the point their enthusiasm for disarmament only stretched to advocating the abolition of the weapons they most feared, and the retention of those

which in the past they had found most serviceable. All were for peace, all were for disarmament; but none found it convenient to relinquish any of the spoils of previous wars, or appreciably to reduce their armed forces. France remained heavily armed; England, even under a Labour Government, continued to spend ^100,000,000 annually on the army, navy and air force; and the nations which had been compulsorily disarmed, found surreptitious ways of manufacturing armaments and training personnel.

Hopes of serious disarmament were centred on the Disarma-